

should contain nothing offensive to either of the parties into which our citizens are divided.

This book makes no pretence of being easy reading. The subject-matter is, I think, too complex, and at some points too elusive, to admit of a treatment that shall be at once easy and adequate. The best a writer can hope for is that his work shall be found clear and instructive by those who give time to the study of it. Not that Political Economy is, on the whole, a very difficult study. It merely calls for some patient reflection, especially at those critical points where sound reason is opposed to superficial appearances. There is nothing in the science that young persons of ordinary ability may not master, if only they apply themselves. It would be a happy reform in our national education, if a portion of the time that is now spent by our youth over barren puzzles in percentage, and the arid subtleties of formal grammar (English and other), were devoted to intelligent study of elementary economics. I cherish a hope that this little book may do something towards promoting such a reform.

CAMBRIDGE, MASS.,
Dec. 1880.